

Lecture 3 – Emergence of the Psy-ences

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Century of the Psyences

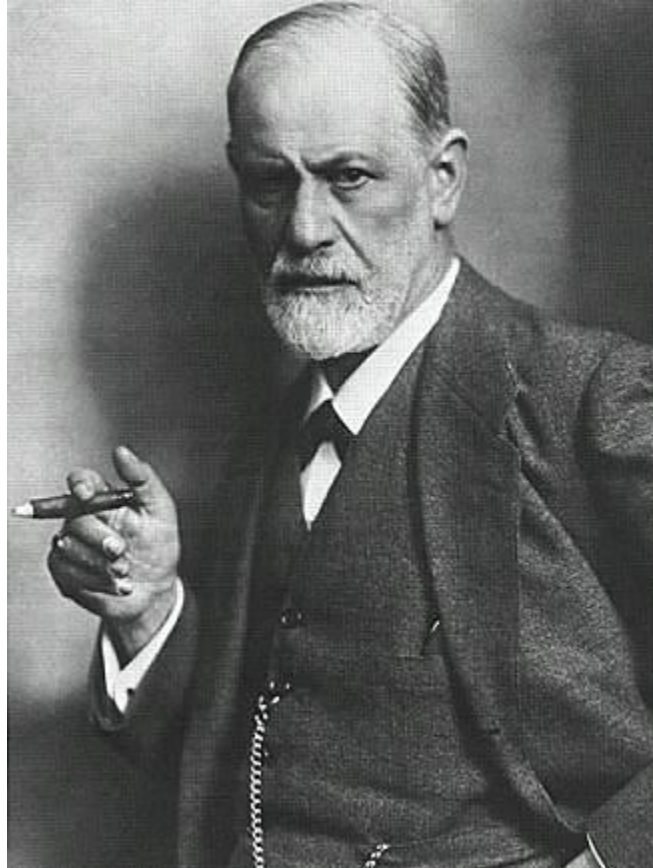
- 20th c. saw a growth in size, scope, and importance of the psy-disciplines.
 - Arrival of “mental illness” shifted meaning beyond problems of reason to include emotional and moral dimensions.
 - By situating emotionality/morality in brain/mind, psy-disciplines simultaneously freed people from consequences of actions, while also dooming them by implying their moral / emotional problems permanent.
- In our culture, understanding, labelling, and reshaping mental processes became seen as central to many endeavours.
 - We turn to the psy-disciplines to “comprehend and surmount problems of the human condition like despair, loss, conflict.”
 - Everyday concerns like “sex, marriage, womanhood and manhood; work, ambition, worldly failure, habits, desires, inclinations” subject to being understood as psychological and potentially pathological.
 - Boom in pop psychology, from how to make decisions to the “art of picking up.”

Century of the Psyences II

- As psy-disciplines and knowledge spread, people became much more concerned with mental health.
 - 20-50% of pop. now likely to receive a diagnosis at some point.
 - Other efforts focused on improving/protecting mental health.
 - Rise of “mental health and wellness industries.”
 - Psy knowledge has spread through schools, mass media, social media, police services, government services, etc.
- Changed expectations and understanding about what it means to be human.
- “Mental health” consequently understood as something requiring immediate attention and sometimes drastic action.
- How have we gotten here?

Freud – A True Revolution

- Psychiatry's greatest moment?



- Or a fatal blow?

Freud's Arrival

- Psychoanalysis – both a theory and treatment - framed mental illness as result of unconscious conflicts between various parts of our mind, typically beginning in childhood.
- Talking as pathway to awareness of unconscious feelings, thoughts, and actions.
- By focusing on new feelings (e.g. anxiety, obsessiveness) and offering new solutions (talk therapy), Freud helped broaden definition of mental illness, expanded notions of who and how illness could be addressed.



Psychoanalytic Movement

- Even though ideas no longer mainstream, key to spread of psy-disciplines and knowledge.
- Intensified belief that processes of the mind are knowable, changeable.
 - Rose: humans became seen as “calculable” and “categorizable.”
- Focus on hitherto ignored emotions widened meaning of illness.
- Took mental healthcare out of the asylum.
- Impetus for other psychotherapeutic modalities.



Pre-WWII climate

- On eve of WWII, psychiatry in strange place:
 - Marginal within medicine, seen as custodians rather than active healers.
 - Asylums overflowing.
 - Although popular, psychoanalysis faced resistance.
 - Beyond reach for many.
 - Not seen as helpful for some.
 - Some practitioners found it theoretically repugnant.
- Sparked a climate of “desperation,” search for new methods and cures.
- New “heroic treatments” somatic in nature.



Heroic Treatments: Fevers, Comas, and Shocks

- Julius Wagner-Jauregg's malarial fever therapy for general paresis.
- Insulin-coma therapy.
- Ladislav von Meduna, believing that epilepsy and schizophrenia were “mirror image diseases” tried to induce epileptic seizures through Cardiazol.
- 1938, Cerletti & Bini pioneered ECT to induce seizures as treatment.
- Only ECT has persisted, although it remains divisive.

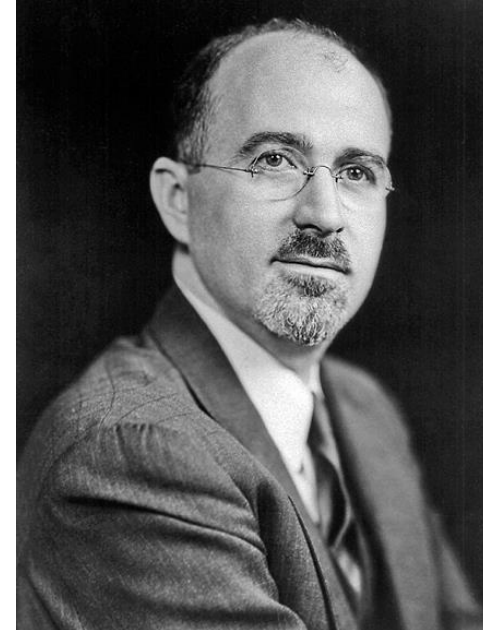


OR



Psychosurgery

- 1935, Egas Moniz claimed incredible results for frontal lobe “leucotomy.”
- Like Wagner-Juaregg, awarded Nobel Prize.
- Freeman introduced “transorbital lobotomy.”
- Toured US to propagandize psychosurgery.
- Ultimately lost license, lobotomy banned.

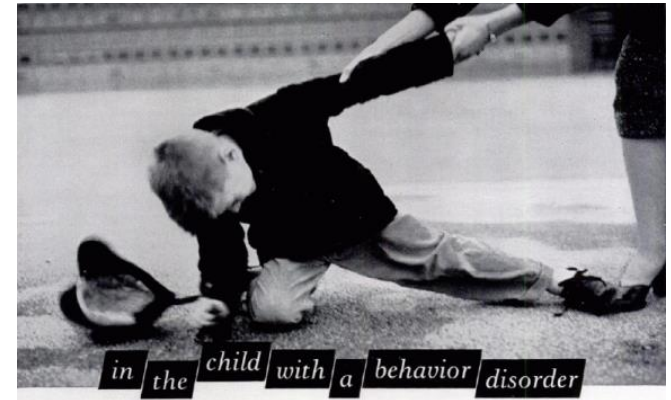


Controversies and Legacies of Heroic Treatments

- Legacies complicated:
 - How well we should understand an intervention before it's used?
 - What does it mean for a treatment “to work”? How do we define “success?” Who gets to define it?
 - Brought to light power imbalances, ethical issues within psychiatry.
- Despite controversies, others defend them as re-establishing a connection between psychiatry and medicine, preserving interest in biological approaches.

The Psychopharmaceutical Revolution

- Laborit revolutionized mental healthcare via chlorpromazine. Quicker, cheaper, safer than heroic treatments.
- First “anti-psychotic” or first “major tranquilizer?”
- Prompted other psychoactive drug experimentation, e.g. mood elevators (anti-depressants), minor tranquilizers (anxiolytics), stimulants.
- Prompted therapeutic optimism, seemed to promise end to asylums.



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decreases anxiety and hostility

improves mood, behavior and sleeping habits

establishes accessibility to guidance or psychotherapy

increases amenability to supervision

facts to bear in mind— Even though the dramatic calming effect of ‘Thorazine’ on belligerent, overactive children may give the impression of a cure, simultaneous supportive counseling and guidance are necessary if lasting benefits are to be assured.

Adequate ‘Thorazine’ dosage for certain seriously disturbed youngsters will sometimes exceed 50-100 mg. t.i.d.

‘Thorazine’ should be administered discriminately and, before prescribing, the physician should be fully conversant with the available literature.

‘Thorazine’ is available in ampuls, tablets and syrup (as the hydrochloride), and in suppositories (as the base).



Smith, Kline & French Laboratories, Philadelphia

*T.M. Reg. U.S. Pat. Off. for chlorpromazine, S.K.F.

Pharmaceuticalisation

- Huge upswing in use of Rx meds to manage ever-widening dimensions of mental health.
- Yet new treatments often herald new conditions.
 - What is normal, abnormal, healthy, sick, safe, dangerous, manageable, etc. tempered by psychopharmaceuticals.
- Drugs once used to alleviate “deficits”, scholars argue a more recent shift towards enhancement, “lifestyle management,” etc., even if language remains the same.
- In their view, the medicalization (pharmaceuticalisation) of life itself.

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Pathways to Pharmaceuticalization

- How did this occur? Some theories:
 - A cultural fetishization of science and technology, borne from the 1950s onwards. Belief that all ills, whether personal or social, can be alleviated by science.
 - Pressures, pace, and competitiveness of modern life.
 - Consumerism: we have implicit trust and faith in things that we can buy, hold, and consume.
 - “Neutral” and “objective” clinical expertise inherently trusted.



Reasons for Growth in Psy-ences

- Scientific advancement, thus justifying more attention, respect, and power?
- Professional expansion?
 - Some believe that as these professions got larger, they claimed legitimacy over ever-increasing domains of human life.
- Is this about a cultural shift?
 - Post-Enlightenment, have we come to cherish hyper-rationality?
 - Psy-disciplines facilitate self-governance by transforming people into calculable, measurable beings, constantly working to ensure our feelings and behaviours stay within particular boundaries.
 - Neoliberalism prompts self-responsibilization. Psy-disciplines may facilitate management of social ills as “personal problems.”

Conclusions

- 20th c. rise of the psy-ences has reshaped how we understand and practice “being human.”
- Psy-disciplines, with intense focus on the individual (whether the organ of the brain or the construct of the mind), have positioned suffering as a fundamentally individual problem.
- By expanding in scope and numbers, psy-disciplines have helped to increase the identification of deviance and the intensity of treatment for it.
- The reasons for the expansion of psy-disciplines and psy-knowledge are numerous and subject to debate.